Infrastructure development in districts

217. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have prepared a comprehensive plan for the infrastructure development in the backward districts in the country;

(b) if so, the details of projects undertaken for execution during the current year; and

(c) the details of funds proposed to be granted for the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) to (c) No, Sir. District Plans are prepared by the concerned State Governments. The Central Government supplements the efforts for development of backward districts through programmes such as Rashtriya Shram Vikas Yojana, National Food for Work Programme and various other schemes for poverty alleviation and sectoral development.

Human Development Index

218. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact while the number of Indians living in poverty has gone down from 35 per cent to 26 per cent during the last decade, India still ranks 127 out of 177 countries for the second year in a row on the Human Development Index of the United Nations;

(b) if so, what are the determinant norms and criteria laid down, besides basic health and education, for determining the index reading; and

(c) what is the plan of action, if any, for the ensuing decade, for improving India's position on the UN Human Development Index, and the targets contemplated thereunder?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) The number of Indians living in poverty as measured by the official methodology of the Government of India has gone down from 36 per cent 1993-94 to 26.1 per cent in 1999-2000. India ranks 127 out of 177 countries as per the Human Development Reports (HDR) 2004 and 2005 prepared by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).